Dublin October 15. 1848

My dear friend

Your letter was a great feast and I thank you very heartily for it. You are certainly very fortunate in having at length had a chance of writing to so great a personage and as I am equally pleased with my opportunity our letters have every probability of being very good humoured. A few years ago I would have thought myself lucky in possessing your autograph, and now behold I have got a whole letter from your very self. I have from my childhood had a tendency to hero worship - but I have been more fortunate than most others in forming an acquaintance with the heroes I admired the most. It is very easy for imaginative people to make themselves ridiculous in this way - for all our idols are only frail like ourselves - nevertheless I would not resign the pleasure to avoid the ridicule. At any rate it is well at my time of life - (but mind, I am not nearly so old as I look) that I feel fresh enough to enjoy my fancies.

Your remarks on the Douglass matter seemed to me so much to the point that I procured five copies of them - after carefully ~~reading~~ omitting from a first copy which was to be the basis of the rest, all those words of yours that might be interpreted as not entirely complimentary to him by his admiring friends. On this point I consulted my wife and my sister in law Maria Waring - so that I had their judgment to attest mine, which was important since the feelings of ladies only were concerned. I sent copies to Cork, Edinburgh, Manchester, and Wrexham - and if they have no other good effect they are likely at least to prevent confusion in the forwarding of the donations - they will keep Rochester & Boston separate. Before I heard from you I had written to Cork, ~~also~~ but my letter was not received in the most friendly way. There are many good sort of people who cannot take in a pleasant way anything you say that differs from their own conclusions. However I have reason to hope that as far as Cork is concerned their donations from thence will not be much if at all less than last year. As to the [illegible] we think to send about one half more than last year and I expect the selections to be both showy & elegant - for I was so fortunate as to find De la Rue's traveller in town, and with the assistance of Maria Waring & Lizzy Poole (that was - she is now married) we had the opportunity of seeing all the samples and choosing from them. As these articles are all very elegant - and are got at first cost prices, with a good discount off for cash I think they ought to answer very well. The traveller undertook

Wilhelmina Dawes (widow of the late George Dawes and an intimate friend of ours) thought a letter to Evania Brooke, an Irish young lady who has been many years in Paris as a student in painting, might be of use to you. I don't know enough of her to say whether it is needed - but I thought it better to take the offer. The letter is written at W. D's request by the lady's father - and your sister is introduced as Mrs. Dawes's friend

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to have all the articles properly marked and papered so that when your sisters open the box they will have no difficulty in comparing them with the invoice which I shall take care to forward to them. If they can manage to let me know what description sell the best I can regulate myself accordingly if we live and do well till ~~there~~ next year. It occurred to me to request him to send the box direct from London to Liverpool and thence to Boston and in this way save ~~the~~ some of the cost of freight. In short you may see that we think we have managed the whole affair incomparably. Of all the Irish contributors Maria Waring is by far the most liberal according to her means. Though she is my near relation, I will say that she is one of the most generous & rigidly conscientious (persons I ever knew.

About the Liberty Bell I wish your sisters to understand that my reluctance to contribute for some years past has arisen from no insensibility to the honor of seeing my name in such good company, nor yet from want of zeal for the cause, but solely and entirely because I had nothing to say that I thought worthy of such a permanent place in Anti Slavery literature. Having ~~been~~ always ~~I have been~~ pressed so hard this time, I beat my brains and have put together by the help of my bad memory and some books, a number of facts (as James Buffum wd say) and anecdotes about the Anti Slavery people of Liverpool which I hope may not be uninteresting. If it answers I shall be greatly pleased with myself, for I have a very humble opinion of my own powers as a writer. As to poetry I have absolutely nothing that wd be at all suitable — It is many years since I left off tagging rhymes and it is not likely I shall ever again pen a stanza. I have lost ~~the~~ any faculty in that way — and it was very little — I ever had. I wish I were a poet for the sake of the cause and then you should see what immortal measures I would weave.

This being Sunday and Harriet having a cold which [illegible] her [illegible] & confined her to the house, she has employed herself in reducing the disjecta membra of my essay to something like Christian calligraphy. I often pity the printers that have to unravel my letters to New York. It is sometimes more than I could very readily do myself.

If you have time and inclination I would be glad to know what the children and how they are learning. I will be greatly gratified & obliged

I have done my best and that is but little to look for contributions. You have seen how little success in approaching our great writers, ~~towards whom~~ I have ever had feelings ~~thereof~~ of reverent admiration — which is no deeper demonstrated by the recent periodical of this delightful book in the East. These great people are liable to intrusion and it is perhaps not at all unnatural that they are not always able to measure the just amount of [illegible] necessary in each case. At any rate, rebuffs are extremely disagreeable — and I am increasingly shy of provoking them. I have applied to James Haughton and a few others and any thing that is sent to me shall be duly forwarded. For my own part I have complained that your sister Maria gave nothing of her own — and it certainly was not because she could not have contributed something better than much of what was printed. I think if I were the editor I would be hard to please in making my selection & would be guided by the quality of the contributions than by any other consideration. I would prefer making the book short and sweet — if I could not have it good and great together. This is only what I think I should do, but if the burden were laid on my shoulders, perhaps I should have another story to tell. The De La Rue box going by itself of course, the articles direct from Dublin will ~~[illegible]~~ take up comparatively little room, and my box will cut but a poor figure. I am taking your advice about the Sea wood boxes and baskets literally, and am sending out a large number. The majority of them will be made in Cork & sent direct from thence in their box. If they sell anything nearly so well as Maria mentioned they will prove a most profitable investment of our money.

Since writing the above I had a most friendly and good humoured letter from Eliza Wigham of Edinburgh, a very pleasing young lady who as you know is very active in anti slavery matters there. This was in reply to the copy of "Weston v Douglass" that I sent her. She says that she has taken to believe ~~that little~~ if any thing ~~[illegible]~~ I can write for

If you had time and inclination I would be glad to know what the children and how they are learning. I will be greatly satisfied & obliged by letters from any of your party whenever you can make it convenient to write. I permitted to send a statement of accounts to Anne is to keep perhaps matters square in the account I ask for Maria['s] [illegible] it for the three pounds.

to Boston than if nothing had been said about Rochester. The contribution to ~~Bost~~ the latter are chiefly, knew who wd probably not have sent at all otherwise. I was most anxious about Edinburgh knowing that they have been so munificent in former years. They hold monthly meetings which Eliza Wigham speaks of as seasons of great refreshing. We have nothing of the kind here – I wish we had – I have nothing to keep me alive in the way of sympathy except deep draughts out of the American A.S. papers and letters now and then. We have no committee & hardly materials to form one. E.W. wonders whether your sister will not be home in time for the fair which could not do without her, and hopes she will call at Edinburgh on the way, saying that Eliz. Pease is to be with them shortly and it would be so delightful to have both together. I wrote to say this was hardly likely, but that she was likely upon seeing you before you cross the Atlantic again.

I may as well tell you that amongst the living authors that I forwarded was George Combe with whom I have lately had some intercourse and correspondence. But he gave no reply. I cant comprehend how such a man can help sympathizing with the cause but it is plain that he dont.

I got a contribution today from a mystical friend in England. It is very grand and Shakspearean – but I have an infirmity of mind about any thing that is too sublime. I cant easily take ~~them~~ it in. At your sisters recommendation I tried to read the Forest Sanctuary – but could ~~no~~ not go on. It was a clear throwing of pearls before swine. Mrs Hemans is too luscious and I am a plain body and have simple tastes. How happy you must be in Paris with your antiquarian sympathies and transatlantic experiences. What a heaven is before you in Milan, & Florence, & Rome. I feel like the starling in his cage (a bulky one I admit) when I think of such enjoyments which I am not likely ever to taste. Whenever you have time and inclination to send me a line (or 500) you will do an act of real charity, for which as in duty bound I will be truly grateful – and so in the effusion of my gratitude for favors to come and with best wishes for all your party

I remain ever truly your friend

Richd D Webb

As you lament the want of money to make purchases for the Fair in Paris, I will be responsible for £3 that you may lay out in this way. The ~~distribution~~ application of the money collected is left pretty much to me. You can mention that what you buy is forwarded on behalf of some friends in Dublin

I have heard that it requires some generalship to lay out money to the best advantage in Paris – that the Parisians have so great scruple against taking in strangers. Verbum sap.

[illegible] D[illegible] (i.e. sister of the late George Dower and an intimate friend of ours) thought a letter to Everina Brooke an Irish young

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